

## House Republican Press Release

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### Graduated License Bill Clears Legislative Hurdle



#### *Legislation Introduced by Scribner Passes Overwhelmingly in Transportation Committee*

**HARTFORD-** Legislation introduced by Representative David Scribner (R-Brookfield) which places restrictions on sixteen and seventeen-year-old drivers passed overwhelmingly in the legislature's Transportation Committee this morning.

The new bill fine-tunes legislation that Representative Scribner initiated and was subsequently passed into law over the past few legislative sessions. The new bill increases the mandated hours behind the wheel for driver training from eight hours to twenty hours, and eliminates restrictions on the age of parents who are passengers in a motor vehicle operated by a sixteen or seventeen-year old, but requires at least one of them to hold an operators license. It also prohibits a sixteen or seventeen-year old who has an operator's license from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the person is driving for work or a school activity, or out of medical necessity. Exemptions are made for ambulance, fire and EMS personnel who are sixteen or seventeen years of age.

"This legislation enhances the previous measures we have been successful in implementing," said **Representative Scribner**. "It provides a more complete program based on the National model provided by the National Highway Safety Institute, and will have broader public safety benefits."

Statistics have demonstrated conclusively that the first few months of a new driver's licensure are critical, and is the period of time when a new driver is most likely to get into a fatal accident. Quite often, the other young occupants in their car distract these young new drivers. According to data compiled by the State Department of Transportation 16 and 17-year-old drivers are 14% more likely to cause a crash resulting in fatalities or injuries while transporting one passenger than while driving alone.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, injury from motor vehicle crashes is the leading cause of death among U.S. teenagers. The crash rates among 16 and 17-year-old drivers are almost three times as high as among 18 and 19-year-olds. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* has reported that young drivers' inexperience and risk-taking have contributed to this high incidence of crashes.

